

IMAGE-ATTACHED MAIL TRANSITING APPARATUS,  
IMAGE-ATTACHED MAIL TRANSITING METHOD, AND  
IMAGE-ATTACHED MAIL TRANSITING PROGRAM

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**Background of the Invention**

Field of the Invention

[0001]

The present invention relates to an image-attached mail transiting apparatus, an image-attached mail transiting method, and an image-attached mail transiting program, which perform predetermined processing for an attached image of an image-attached mail, which is transmitted from a communication device with a camera, according to the performance of the camera.

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Description of the Related Art

[0002]

In recent years, improvement in performance of the cellular phone itself and improvement in the cellular phone service make it possible not only to transmit/receive the sound as the original function of the phone but also to transmit/receive E-mail and the image. Until now, the image that is transmitted/received by the cellular phone is the image picked up by the digital camera, or the like. In recent years, since the camera such as the mobile camera,

the CCD camera, or the like is installed into the cellular phone, the service of transmitting the image picked up by such a camera to another cellular phone, or the like is provided.

5 [0003]

However, since reduction in size and weight is required for the cellular phone, the camera that can be installed into the cellular phone is limited to the miniature camera. In this case, since such miniature 10 camera is inferior in picture quality to the normal digital camera, it is desired that the picked-up image should be processed in some way. In particular, these miniature cameras are different in the performance such as sharpness, focusing function, etc. according to the type of the 15 camera. Therefore, it is desirable that the picked-up image is should be processed in every type of the miniature camera.

#### **Summary of the Invention**

20 [0004]

An object of the present invention is to provide an image-attached mail transiting apparatus, an image-attached mail transiting method, and an image-attached mail transiting program, which are capable of performing 25 predetermined image processing for an image attached to an

image-attached mail according to a type of a transmitting terminal with a camera, which transmitted the image-attached mail.

[0005]

5       The invention provides an image-attached mail transiting apparatus for performing predetermined image processing for an image according to a type of a transmitting terminal with a camera, which transmits E-mail to which the image is attached (referred to as "image-  
10 attached mail" hereinafter), has type discriminating means for discriminating the type of the transmitting terminal, which transmits the image-attached mail to be received by the image-attached mail transiting apparatus; parameter deciding means for deciding a first parameter indicating  
15 what processing should be performed for an attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the transmitting terminal; and image processing means for performing predetermined image processing based on the first parameter for the attached image, wherein an image  
20 processed by the image processing means is substituted for the attached image of the image-attached mail, and then the image-attached mail to which a substituted image is attached is transmitted to a receiving terminal.

[0006]

25       According to the invention, the predetermined image

processing can be performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the transmitting terminal with the camera. Therefore, variation in the image quality due to the difference in the 5 performance of the camera can be suppressed. As a result, such difference in the performance of the camera installed into various types of the transmitting terminals can be absorbed.

[0007]

10 Further, the type discriminating means discriminates the type of the receiving terminal having a display, the parameter deciding means decides a second parameter indicating what processing should be performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail according to the 15 type of the receiving terminal, and the image processing means performs predetermined image processing based on the second parameter for the attached image.

[0008]

Thus, since the predetermined processing are 20 performed for the attached image according to the type of the receiving terminal having the display, the image processing can be executed to meet the performance of the display that is used in the receiving terminal. Therefore, variation in the image quality due to the difference in the 25 performance of the display can be suppressed. As a result,

such difference in the performance of the display that are used in various types of the receiving terminals can be absorbed.

[0009]

5       Further, the type discriminating means discriminates the type of the receiving terminal having a display, the parameter deciding means decides a parameter indicating what processing should be performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the  
10 transmitting terminal and the type of the receiving terminal, and the image processing means performs predetermined image processing based on the parameter for the attached image. Therefore, the predetermined processing can be performed to the attached image according  
15 to both the type of the transmitting terminal with the camera and the type of the receiving terminal with the display.

[0010]

      The invention provides an image-attached mail transiting method performing predetermined image processing to an image according to a type of a transmitting terminal with a camera, which transmits E-mail to which the image is attached (referred to as "image-attached mail" hereinafter), has a first type discriminating step of  
25 discriminating the type of the transmitting terminal, which

transmits the image-attached mail; a first parameter deciding step of deciding a first parameter indicating what processing should be performed for an attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the 5 transmitting terminal; a first image processing step of performing the predetermined image processing based on the first parameter for the attached image; an image substituting step of substituting an image processed in the first image processing step for the attached image of the 10 image-attached mail; and a mail transmitting step of transmitting the image-attached mail, to which a substituted image is attached, to the receiving terminal.

[0011]

Further, the image-attached mail transiting method 15 also has a second type discriminating step of discriminating the type of the receiving terminal having a display; a second parameter deciding step of deciding a second parameter indicating what processing should be performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail 20 according to the type of the receiving terminal; and a second image processing step of performing the predetermined image processing based on the second parameter for the attached image, wherein the image substituting step substitutes an image processed in the 25 first image processing step and the second image processing

step for the attached image of the image-attached mail.

[0012]

Further, the image-attached mail transiting method also has a second type discriminating step of 5 discriminating the type of the receiving terminal having a display, wherein the first parameter deciding step decides a parameter indicating what processing should be performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the transmitting terminal and the type of 10 the receiving terminal, and the first image processing step performs predetermined processing based on the parameter for the attached image.

[0013]

The invention provides an image-attached mail 15 transiting program which a computer executes the image-attached mail transiting method.

#### **Brief Description of the Drawings**

FIG.1 is a configurative view showing a mail 20 transmitting system utilizing an image-attached mail transiting apparatus according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG.2 is an explanatory view showing a table used in a mail control portion to decide a first parameter;

25 FIG.3 is an explanatory view showing a table used in

the mail control portion to decide a second parameter; and

FIG.4 is a flowchart explaining an operation of the image- attached mail transiting apparatus according to the embodiment of the present invention.

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#### **Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

[0014]

Embodiment of an image-attached mail transiting apparatus and an image-attached mail transiting method 10 according to the present invention will be explained in detail with reference to the drawings hereinafter.

[0015]

FIG.1 is a configurative view showing a mail transmitting system utilizing an image-attached mail 15 transiting apparatus according to an embodiment of the present invention. In FIG.1, the mail transmitting system of the present embodiment is constructed to include a transmitting terminal 101, an image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103, a receiving terminal 105, and a 20 network 107.

[0016]

The transmitting terminal 101 and the receiving terminal 105 are the communication device such as the cellular phone, PHS, PDA, or the like, in which the 25 miniature digital camera such as the mobile camera, the CCD

camera, or the like (referred simply to as "camera" hereinafter) is installed. These terminals 101 and 105 can transmit/receive E-mail to which the image picked up by the camera is attached (referred to as "image-attached mail" 5 hereinafter) via the network 107 and the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103.

[0017]

Also, as shown in FIG.1, the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103 of the present embodiment has a 10 mail receiving portion 151, a mail control portion 153, an image processing portion 155, and a mail transmitting portion 157. The image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103 receives the image-attached mail transmitted from the transmitting terminal 101, and then performs predetermined 15 process for the image attached to such image-attached mail.

In particular, the predetermined process is image processing that are fitted for the type of the transmitting terminal 101.

[0018]

20 Respective constituent elements of the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103 of the present embodiment will be explained hereunder. The mail receiving portion 151 receives the image-attached mail transmitted from the transmitting terminal 101 via the network 107. The mail 25 control portion 153 extracts the attached image from the

image- attached mail, then instructs the image processing portion 155 how to process the attached image, and then substitutes such processed image for the original image attached to the image-attached mail. The image processing 5 portion 155 processes the image with the processing which is instructed by the mail control portion 153. The mail transmitting portion 157 transmits the image-attached mail, to which the image processed by the image processing portion 155 is attached, to the receiving terminal 105 via 10 the network 107.

[0019]

As described above, the image processing portion 155 provided to the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103 of the embodiment performs the image processing 15 according to the type of the transmitting terminal 101. In addition to the concerned processing, the image processing portion 155 also performs the image processing according to the type of the receiving terminal 105, and the common image processing that are independent of the types of the 20 transmitting terminal 101 and the receiving terminal 105. Therefore, the mail control portion 153 discriminates the information indicating which type of the terminal the image-attached mail received by the mail receiving portion 151 is transmitted from and which type of the terminal the 25 image-attached mail is transmitted to, etc. by looking up

the header of the image-attached mail. In other words, the mail control portion 153 discriminates respective types of the transmitting terminal 101 and the receiving terminal 105 based on the header of the image-attached mail.

5 [0020]

After the mail control portion 153 discriminated respective types of the transmitting terminal 101 and the receiving terminal 105, the mail control portion 153 decides a parameter indicating what processing should be 10 performed for the attached image, according to respective types of the transmitting terminal 101 and the receiving terminal 105. In this case, such parameter is separated into a first parameter decided based on the type of the transmitting terminal 101 and a second parameter decided 15 based on the type of the receiving terminal 105.

[0021]

The mail control portion 153 uses a table shown in FIG.2 to decide the first parameter. As shown in FIG.2, in this table, parameters are allocated to every type of the 20 transmitting terminal. For example, a first parameter "11" indicating the image processing portion 155 to increase a sharpness by 3 levels is allocated to the type "AA-01" of the terminal. In this case, plural types into which the same camera is installed may be formed into a group, and 25 then the parameter may be set every group. For example, in

FIG.2, the terminals of three types "C-401", "D01", "E111" are formed into a group, and then a parameter "16" is allocated to this group.

[0022]

5       Further, the mail control portion 153 uses a table shown in FIG.3 to decide the second parameter. As shown in FIG.3, in this table, parameters are allocated to every type of the receiving terminal. For example, a second parameter "22" indicating the image processing portion 155  
10      to change an image size to  $144 \times 144$  pixels and 7KB in the JPEG format is allocated to the type "C-401" of the terminal. In this case, plural types into which the same display is installed may be formed into a group, and then the parameter may be set every group. For example, in  
15      FIG.3, the terminals of two types "AA-01" and "AA-02" are formed into a group, and then a parameter "21" is allocated to this group.

[0023]

When the first parameter and the second parameter are  
20      decided by the mail control portion 153, these parameters are supplied to the image processing portion 155. The image processing portion 155 performs processing to the image, which is predetermined according to these parameters. When the type of the receiving terminal 105  
25      cannot be discriminated by looking up the header of the

image-attached mail, the second parameter cannot be decided and therefore the image processing portion 155 performs the image processing based on the first parameter only. In this case, in the above explanation, the parameter is 5 decided separately as the first parameter decided based on the type of the transmitting terminal 101 and the second parameter decided based on the type of the receiving terminal 105. But one parameter may be decided based on respective types of the transmitting terminal 101 and the 10 receiving terminal 105.

[0024]

Next, an operation of the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103 (image-attached mail transiting method) of the embodiment will be explained with reference 15 to FIG.4 hereunder. First, the mail receiving portion 151 receives the image-attached mail (S401). Then, the mail control portion 153 extracts the image from the image-attached mail (S403). Then, the mail control portion 153 discriminates the type of the transmitting terminal 101 and 20 the type of the receiving terminal 105 by looking up the header of the image-attached mail (S405). Then, the mail control portion 153 decides the parameter based on the type discriminated in step S405 (S407).

[0025]

25 Then, the image processing portion 155 performs the

predetermined image processing to the image extracted in step S403 based on the parameter decided in step S407 (S409). Then, the mail control portion 153 substitutes the image processed in step S409 for the original attached 5 image of the image-attached mail (S411). Then, the mail transmitting portion 157 transmits the image-attached mail derived in step S411 to the receiving terminal 105 (S413).

[0026]

As described above, according to the image-attached 10 mail transiting apparatus 103 and the image-attached mail transiting method of the embodiment, since predetermined processing are performed for the attached image of the image-attached mail according to the type of the transmitting terminal 101, the image processing can be 15 executed to meet the performance of the camera installed into the transmitting terminal 101. Hence, variation in the image quality due to the difference in the performance of the camera can be suppressed. As a result, the difference in the performance of the camera installed into 20 the transmitting terminals can be absorbed. Therefore, the receiving terminal 105 can obtain the image with better image quality regardless of the type of the transmitting terminal 101.

[0027]

25 Also, since the predetermined processing are

performed for the attached image according to the type of the receiving terminal 105, the image processing can be executed to meet the performance of the display installed into the receiving terminal 105. Hence, variation in the 5 image quality due to the difference in the performance of the display can be suppressed. As a result, the difference in the performance of the display installed into the receiving terminals can be absorbed. Therefore, the receiving terminal 105 can obtain the image with better 10 image quality regardless of the type of the receiving terminal 105.

[0028]

The image-attached mail, the image of which is substituted for the processed image, is transmitted from 15 the mail transmitting portion 157. In contrast, the processed image may be stored in an image storing portion (not shown), and then the mail transmitting portion 157 may transmit the mail, which recites URL in which the processed images are stored, etc., to the receiving terminal 105. In 20 this case, when the user who operates the receiving terminal 105 accesses a web server (not shown) based on URL recited in the mail being transmitted from the image-attached mail transiting apparatus 103, etc., the web server reads the processed image stored in the image 25 storing portion and then transmits the image data to the

receiving terminal 105.

[0029]

Therefore, since the user of the receiving terminal 105 can see the image attached to the image-attached mail, 5 the corresponding service can be provided to the receiving terminal that cannot receive the image-attached mail. In this case, the image stored in the image storing portion is processed by using the first parameter explained in the above, while the image processing based on the second 10 parameter are performed when the request to see the image is issued from the user of the receiving terminal 105.